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THE DEVELOPMENT OF MYSTIC WHARF

Prepared by:

Rick Kuner
Project Planning Officer -
Charlestown
First Draft: May 18, 1966

This report should be considered as a working paper. It tries to avoid duplicating current efforts of the Renewal Planning Division in its industrial study and previous efforts by the Charlestown staff, therefore, it is not a complete document in and of itself. The purpose is to establish a framework for answering the following two questions:

Question 1: What kind of development can we expect on Mystic Wharf?

Summary Answer: Mystic Wharf is suitable: (1) for the storage and distribution of goods and raw materials, (2) for the processing of bulk raw materials, and (3) as a resource for industrial firms displaced by governmental actions. These three are not mutually exclusive.

Question 2: What would constitute an "appropriate development" proposal mentioned in the Urban Renewal Plan?

Summary Answer: Appropriate development proposals would provide for the development of the entire Mystic Wharf with industries which would be compatible with the housing to be constructed on Parcel R-1 and the adjacent community center - recreation area.

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Question 2: What would constitute an "appropriate development" proposal mentioned in the Urban Renewal Plan?

Summary Answer: Appropriate development proposals would provide for the development of the entire Mystic Wharf with industries which would be compatible with the housing to be constructed on Parcel R-1 and the adjacent community center - recreation area.

The remainder of this report will discuss these two questions in more detail. Accordingly, it is organized as follows:

- A. Provisions of the Urban Renewal Plan
- B. Site Analysis
- C. Marketability
- D. Criteria for Evaluating Appropriate Development Proposals.

Appendix 1: Section 603, "Mystic Wharf," of the Charlestown Urban Renewal Plan.

Maps:

- #1 Ownership
- #2 Land Availability & Schiavone's Proposal
- #3 Proposed Zoning Districts

A. PROVISIONS OF THE URBAN RENEWAL PLAN

Appendix 1 contains a copy of Section 603, "Mystic Wharf" of the Urban Renewal Plan. The main provisions are summarized below:

1. Intent

Mystic Wharf should be developed as a General and Waterfront Industrial Area. Any development along, or adjacent to the Little Mystic Channel must be of reduced scale and suitably landscaped to respect the residential and recreational nature of the channel area. If an integrated development of the entire site cannot be accomplished, then Mystic Wharf should be developed in one of two ways:

Alternative A:

1/2 - 2/3 of the site -- an integrated General & Waterfront Industrial development along the Mystic River

1/3 - 1/2 of the site -- a restricted industrial area along Terminal Street of reduced scale and suitably landscaped.

Alternative B:

1/2 of the site -- General, Waterfront, or Restricted Industrial Development along the Mystic River

1/2 of the site -- residential development along Terminal Street

2. Requirements

Any development of more than an incidental portion of the site, and any change in use, shall be subject to review by the BRA under procedures which may be established by the Authority. If no development proposals, or development proposals insufficient to insure appropriate development of the entire site are made by the owners within 18 months after approval of the Plan by the City Council (June 7, 1965 to December 6, 1966), then the BRA may acquire any or all portions of the site.

B. SITE ANALYSIS

1. Boundaries (See Map #1)

The general boundaries of the area that comes under Section 603 of the Urban Renewal Plan are as follows:

North -- Mystic River

South -- Terminal Street

East -- U.S. Gypsum, Inc. and the Boston & Maine R.R.

West -- Wiggins Terminal, Inc.

U.S. Gypsum, Inc. owns 6.2 acres of land outside the project boundaries and 1.8 acres within the boundaries.

They have been advised that their property will not come under the controls of Section 603.

2. Ownership (See Map #1)

Precise ownership data cannot be obtained unless all titles are examined, if for no other reason than the Boston & Maine Railroad has sold land while retaining right-of-way and other easements. The following is based on Assessors' Records and three deeds.

OWNER	APPROXIMATE ACREAGE
<u>Within Project Area</u>	
Boston & Maine Railroad Corp.	10.3
Schiavone Realty Corp.	22.0
Sixty Terminal Street Corp.	25.1
U.S. Gypsum, Inc.	1.8
Subtotal	<u>59.2</u>
<u>Outside Project Area</u>	
Comm. of Mass. (Port Authority)	16.7
U.S. Gypsum, Inc.	6.2
Sub Total	<u>22.9</u>
<u>Grand Total</u>	<u>82.1</u>

3. Land Availability (See Map #2)

Schiavone has submitted a proposal which breaks down as follows:

OWNER	APPROXIMATE ACREAGE	COMMENTS
Boston & Maine R.R.	10.3	--
Schiavone - Sixty Terminal	14.6	Scrap Metal
Schiavone - Sixty Terminal	26.9	Available for Development

The 14.6 acres that Schiavone apparently wants to reserve for the scrap metal operation represents a much smaller site than he is now using. How much trackage will be required by the Boston & Maine Railroad is still an unresolved question, however, it is clear that some trackage will be required by operations at Mystic Pier, U.S. Gypsum, Schiavone's, Wiggins Terminal, and perhaps Marine Disposal (which leases 7-8 acres from the Port Authority). Even if all existing trackage remains in use, there are still about 7 acres of open land with waterfront access that could be developed.

4. Topography -

Generally flat.

5. Subsoil Conditions (based on memo from Francis C.J. Collins to William McGrath, "Computation of Area of 'Mystic Wharf' and Analysis of Subsoil Conditions")

Based on meager borings the Wharf appears to be filled land, predominantly river silt. The estimated price for a one-story building is \$10 per square foot, based on a floor slab with roofing and walls carried on spread footings. Multi-story buildings or buildings with heavier loads will require pilings instead of spread footings, which means an additional cost of \$1-\$2 per square foot for a total cost of \$11-\$12 per square foot.

6. Utilities

- a. Water - 8" and 12" lines
- b. Storm Drainage - Terminal Street from Medford Street to the Mystic Bridge (just for drainage of the street)
- c. Street Lighting - Terminal Street
- d. Proposed 48" outfall drainage parallel to Wiggins Terminal and running from Medford Street to the Mystic River.

7. Accessibility

- Ships -- 700 front feet along the Mystic River (deep water pier)
- Rail -- Boston & Maine Railroad
- Highway -- Several minutes away from the Mystic River Bridge and the proposed Inner Belt.
- Mass. Transit -- Bus along Bunker Hill Street

8. Zoning

W-2 District

C. MARKETABILITY

1. Market Demand

The Land Utilization and Marketability Study for Charlestown, prepared by Larry Smith & Co., Nov., 1963 indicates that demand could arise from industries which are engaged in:

"a) the transportation, storage, and distribution of goods and raw materials,
b) the processing of bulky raw materials at the point of, and in connection with, the unloading of such materials from vessels," (p. 46)

To these two types of industries may be added a third type, which is not necessarily exclusive, namely,

c) industrial relocatees

The industrial study now underway in the Renewal Planning Division will provide more information and document the extent of the demand generated by these types of industries, especially the relocatees.

2. Absorption

Land absorption is much slower in industrial districts than in either shopping center or residential developments. The Larry Smith report indicates that there is only a latent demand for industrial land like the Wharf, and a sophisticated and aggressive marketing effort is required in order to insure a successful development.

D. CRITERIA FOR EVALUATING DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

An acceptable development proposal should meet three general criteria:

1. There should be provisions to insure integrated development of the entire site.
2. Industries displaced by urban renewal or highway construction should be given priority in locating on the Wharf.

3. All industries should be required to meet a set of design controls, including design review.

Because waterfront industrial uses are frequently incompatible with residential development, design controls are necessary to insure that the two can live together. To initiate discussion the following is suggested:

1. Zoning

All of Mystic Wharf is in a W-2 district. A new M-1 district should be established for the southern portion. This M-1 district would be bounded generally as follows: (See Map #3)

North -- a line drawn 400 ft. north of, and parallel to, the centerline of Terminal Street.

South -- Terminal Street

East -- Chelsea Street

West -- Project Boundary

Zoning Code requirements would apply to both the M-1 and the W-2 districts, and the following controls would be added:

A. Design Review

1. All proposals must undergo Design Review under procedures established by the BRA.

B. Setback Along Terminal Street

1. No building shall be closer than 30 feet to Terminal Street. This area shall be suitably landscaped to respect the housing and community center - recreation area.

C. Performance Standards

1. Smoke: The emission of dense smoke is forbidden. Dense smoke is defined as equal to the Ringelmann Chart No. 2 or darker.
2. Noise:
 - a) No industry may operate more than one shift, which must be during the day (7 A.M. to 7 P.M.).
 - b) No industry may operate on Sundays, normal business holidays, or at night.
 - c) No railroad cars or trucks may be moved between the hours of 7 P.M. to 7 A.M., either to and from the Wharf or within the Wharf.
3. Odor:
 - a) No industry may commit an odor nuisance.
 - b) Those industries listed under Use Item #70 of the Boston Zoning Code must present detailed plans to the BRA as evidence that their operation will not cause an odor nuisance.
4. Dust & Dirt
 - a) No industry may emit fly ash in excess of 0.3 grains per cubic foot of flue gas at a stack temperature of 500 degrees Fahrenheit.
 - b) All industries must be able to keep all dust and dirt confined within the property lines.

5. Noxious Gases:

a) Producers of noxious gases are forbidden.

6. Glare: Operations which produce glare, such as those involving welding operations or acetylene torch cutting shall be performed so that the glare cannot be seen by anyone standing on the ground outside the property.

7. Industrial or Sewage Wastes: Industrial or Sewage wastes must be discharged into the city sewerage system.

D. Sign Regulations

1. Number of Signs Permitted: A maximum of two signs shall be permitted for each industry occupying a building, including any sign which is part of the building's architecture. No sign fixed to the wall may extend above the roof or parapet.

2. Subject Matter: Signs shall pertain only to the identification of the business conducted within the building and the products sold or manufactured, and to the direction of visitors. No pictures or samples will be permitted on a sign except as part of a trade mark.

3. Sign Dimensions: No sign shall exceed a maximum area of more than three square feet for each running foot of the face of the building display-

ing such signs; and a maximum projection of not more than 12 inches from the face of the building. Plaques shall have a maximum area of 8 square feet.

4. Types of Signs:

a) Permitted

1. Horizontal wall signs
2. Parapet signs, including signs on top of canopy or marquee
3. Plaque attached to the face of the building in close proximity to the main entrance and bearing the firm's name or trade mark.
4. Signs which are part of the building's architecture.
5. Such other signs as the BRA shall approve.

b) Prohibited

1. Revolving signs
2. Flashing or animated signs

5. Illumination: Any spotlight or similar illumination shall be so directed or shielded that the light source is not visible from the street or from adjacent properties.

SECTION 603: Properties Not to be Acquired.

A. "Mystic Wharf"

Any development of the property known as "Mystic Wharf", bounded generally to the south by Terminal Street, to the west by property now or formerly owned by Wiggins Terminals, Inc., to the north by the Mystic River and to the east by property now or formerly owned by U.S. Gypsum, Inc. and the Boston and Maine Railroad, which described property is now or was formerly owned by Schiavone Realty Corporation, and Sixty Terminal Street, Inc., and the Boston and Maine Railroad, shall be in accordance with the following:

1. Intent: It is intended that this site should be appropriately developed as a General and Waterfront Industrial area, provided that any development along or adjacent to the Little Mystic Channel be of reduced scale, and suitably landscaped, to respect the residential and recreational nature of the channel area. Those General and Waterfront Industrial uses permitted under these categories by the Boston Zoning Code are considered generally appropriate.

In the event that an integrated development of the entire site cannot be accomplished, then the site should be developed in one of the alternative manners listed below:

Alternative A: An integrated General and Waterfront Industrial development along the Mystic River, and utilizing about half to two-thirds of the site. A Restricted Industrial area along Terminal Street, utilizing about one-third to one-half of the site, and of reduced scale and suitably landscaped.

Alternative B: General, Waterfront or Restricted Industrial development along the Mystic River, and utilizing about half the site. Residential development along Terminal Street, utilizing about half the site.

The appropriate development of this site is essential to the achievement of the objectives of this Urban Renewal Plan. Improper industrial use or development, by virtue of traffic generation, scale and mass of structures, poor relation to existing and proposed housing and recreation, and other factors, could undermine the renewal of Charlestown. Because of existing site and ownership characteristics, however, it is expected that the present owners, or their successors, can develop a development proposal consistent with their needs and with the requirements of this section.

2. Requirements: Any development of more than an incidental portion of the site, and any change in use, shall be subject to review by the Authority, under procedures which may be established by the Authority. In any event, if no development proposals, or development proposals insufficient to insure appropriate development of the entire site, are made by the owner or owners thereof, within 18 months after the approval of this Plan by the Boston City Council, the Authority may acquire any or all portions of the site in order to accomplish the objectives of the Urban Renewal Plan.

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